

Venka-Viedienkina P. Methodological specifics of environmental policy analysis

Today's environmental policy is a complex phenomenon which not only operates on the level of environmental protection, but also has to take into account economic and societal factors. Such interdisciplinarity requires developed theoretical and methodological instruments. There is a variety of scientific papers in Ukraine and abroad which focus on the problems of environmental policy, though most of the researchers tend to use general methodology of social sciences, economics or law, while Ukrainian political science still stands aside.

The purpose of the article is to define a certain set of methods to be used for political analysis of environmental policy. Any public policy can be explored on different stages of its realisation: starting from agenda setting and strategy formulation and ending with monitoring and evaluation. This article investigates the methodology for assessing policy efficiency on the stage of implementation and evaluation (results assessment). Comparative (cross-national) analysis is taken as a general scientific approach, since it gives an opportunity to narrow down the subject of a research and investigate similarities and differences of certain political phenomena. While exploring environmental policy as a process, it could be expedient to combine comparative approach with certain empirical methods, such as event analysis, case study and document analysis. Thus, event analysis could be of help if the aim of the research is to define the stages of policy development and institutionalisation, see the connections between certain events in the past and the present and assess policy efficiency in historical context. In turn, case study is a perfect method when it comes to investigation of particular subjects or layers of environmental policy. For example, both the Kyoto protocol and the Aarhus convention are remarkable international agreements (being the basis of current environmental policy), and could be used as indicators for policy efficiency. The investigation of those documents implementation can show what the problems of policy implementation are; what the system of relations between economy and ecology is in a given country; how well the environmental democracy is developed in the society; what the roles of civil society, the government and judicial system are in the environmental decision-making, etc.

Environmental policy has its own goals, and to define whether those are reached or not, the researcher might want to analyse policy results. If the welfare of people and the environment is the main purpose of environmental policy, then the parameters which define the condition of those should be explored. There are many different indicators which can be of use, several are considered in this article. Human Development Index (HDI) used by the UNDP is a complex indicator which includes economic, societal and health parameters. HDI is a mediated indicator, yet it shows what the population condition is in the country, and so whether the policy is effective or not. Environmental Performance Index is another relevant indicator which represents the general state of ecosystems and environment in a given country. Apart from the indexes mentioned, there is a set of indicators listed in the Strategy of National Environmental Policy of Ukraine (until the year 2030) which also might be used to assess the effectiveness of environmental policy implementation.

Key words: environmental policy, cross-national analysis, event analysis, case study, the Kyoto Protocol, the Aarhus Convention.